

Edited Interview with Seán Kinsella in Shankhill (12/3/2008)

Máirtín Mac Con Iomaire (MM) Seán Kinsella (SK)

1. **MM:** Where and when were you born?
2. **SK:** I was born in Curraclare on the 24th June 1931, I'm a Clare man, I came to Dublin when I was two, I'll be seventy seven this year. My dad was from Wexford, and my mam was from Curraclare, her name was Mac Mahon, and they came to Dublin very young, I suppose my dad got a job, he worked in the Richmond Hospital all his life. I just have one sister; she's still alive and lives out in Finglas.
3. **MM:** Where did you live?
4. **SK:** I lived on 66 Clonliffe Road, and Croke Park was my back garden! We used to climb up the embankment for the matches, there was no Hill 16 back then, you just climbed up, and that is how I got involved in feeding the Dublin team and all sporting people.
5. I remember watching my dad, god rest him, cooking his lunch on a the shovel that he used to put the coal into the furnace, because that shovel was made of stainless steel, and there was now chance of you getting any bacteria, and the engine drivers and the firemen on the trains used to do the same thing which goes to prove that you don't have to have the best of everything, you can cook on anything. But when my mum and dad were sick in bed, I got up on a butter box and made their breakfast for them. And this gift that God gave me came from my Aunt Betty, my mother's sister from County Clare, and she worked in 12 Bushy Park Road, which was the mansion of the Childers. Mr Childers was shot as you know during the Howth gunrunning and they had two sons, one (Erskine) became president, and Bobby became the head of the Irish Press. But my aunt was in charge of running the house and cooking. And she was one of the greatest of all times. She could make a cake today and you could have it a month afterwards. Today you make a cake and it's all this high ratio flour and all that false stuff, but she is the one where I got the gift. Because cooking is an art, it is, the only difference between an artist and a chef is that an artist will do a painting and it will hang on the wall, a chef will make a fabulous meal and the next day it is gone.
6. **MM:** It is an ephemeral art.
7. **SK:** And chefs are born, they are not made, I don't care, I've had fellows from Cathal Brugha Street and we'd have this beautiful asparagus from California and I said will you, you know what he did, he threw the spears out, another fellow was doing lobster and threw the meat out and kept the shells. It comes from the heart.
8. **MM:** Did you have experience with your aunty Betty, did you work with her or see her in action?
9. **SK:** No, in those days in the 1940s, she was the one who looked after us, she brought us on holidays, she was never married. I mean my mother bought me a bicycle on the never never in Hannah's on the Green, because I had to be in at five in the morning for breakfasts, and I used to come in behind the horse drawn carriages coming in from North County Dublin with the pyramids of cabbages and cauliflowers, and I'd get in behind them for shelter. I hired that bicycle out in the afternoon for sixpence to try and pay it back. Tony O'Reilly used to sell the butt of his apple when he was up in Belvedere, that is true. I mean the pyramids of cabbage and cauliflower, they could sell every one of them, they weren't there for decorative purposes, the air, they were all as fresh as when they were taken out of the ground. Nowadays everything is in a plastic bag.

Discussion on quality of food and meat today.

10. Food is a language, you can go to anywhere in the world and you may not speak the language but you can eat the food. And it is great to see now, when I was made executive chef of the P&O Lines, I had to be French, I had to be Swiss, but I was an Irishman, 'Jesus, where did you come from'. I always believed to lead people rather than driving them. If you want a job done, you start doing it and they warm to you, but this business nowadays (of shouting and roaring) it's all from Ramsay, I don't know. In those days, ok, but you had a job, Toddy (O'Sullivan) used to come around at Christmas and he'd though you ten cigarettes, no I never smoked. Those were the times, 7 (shillings) and 6 (pence) a week. When I was in Frascatti's which was the place at the time on Suffolk Street, I had a friend who told me they were looking for a *commis* in the Gresham, and I got dressed up and went down, and I met Toddy in the hall and he looked down at me and he said 'yes', and I said 'I believe you are looking for a *commis* in the kitchen', and he said 'why do you want to come working in this hotel?', and I said 'because it's the best hotel in the world', and he said 'can you start tomorrow?' (laughter). Had I said anything else he probably would have shown me the door (laugh). So Toddy was Toddy.
11. **MM:** So let me bring you back a bit, you did your primary education in Canice's and O'Connell's. Did you get a scholarship to O'Connell's?

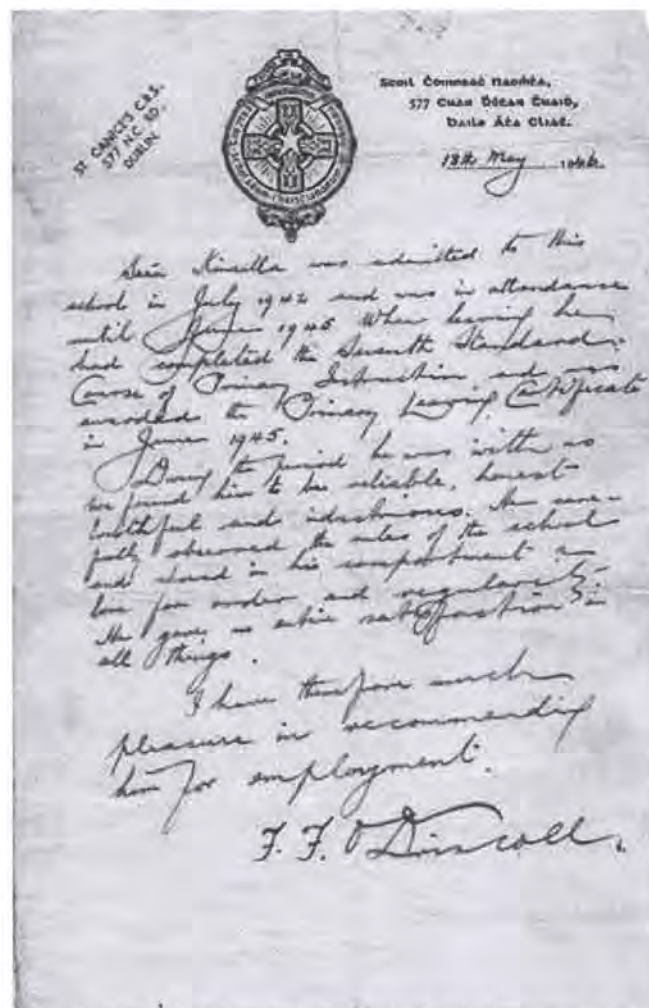


Figure SK.1: Sean Kinsella Reference from St.Canice's School (1946)

12. **SK:** No, at those days if you showed any good signs, and I was an alter boy at that time and god gave me a great voice and I used to compete at the time with Austin Gaffney, he used to live in Clonliffe Gardens and I lived on Clonliffe Road and we were great friends, it was just things were so bad, the first Christmas present I gave my parents was a sod of turf, and I wanted to get a job to help, see you're too young to remember, in those days to get a job, to see my dad get up at four or five in the morning, because the Richmond Hospital, it is now a court, at the time there were three hospitals, the Richmond, the Hardwick and the Auxillary, and he had to be on duty in case they needed to put the full heating on for the operation theatres or whatever the case may be. They later moved to 3 North Brunswick Street, on the grounds of the Richmond, so he would be nearer, because he had to walk from Clonliffe Road.
13. **MM:** At what stage did the family move?
14. **SK:** Oh, that was later, I was at sea, but I went to live with them when I came home.
15. **MM:** What I find fascinating about your schooling is that there were three guys in the same class in Canice's who went on to become the leading chefs of Dublin, yourself, Jimmy Kilbride, and Vincent Dowling.
16. **MM:** That poor chap, it broke my heart to see him, he was working in the Star and Garter in Richmond, he was working in England, one of the nicest parts, and Vinnie had a motorbike, and we used to play football up the back lane in Jammet's and Marc Faure was the head chef when I went there, and Josef the head waiter and Marcel was the manager, and there was a chap called Sheridan there as the roast cook and poor Mr Dunne was there in the *gardemanger*, the larder, and after being in the Gresham, and of course I could hear Marcel ask 'how is he getting on?' and Sherridan said 'oh, he's very interested in getting on very well', and he made the remark 'a new broom brushes clean'. And I proved my point, and moved around and Vinny became attached to me, and I used to go on the motorbike, I never told my parents. But I couldn't believe when I met him over in the Star and Garter, he had dissipated so much. But he was the first Irish chef to get a job in Jammet's. Now Jammets was the place in the world. You had to make a booking weeks in advance. There was a waiter there called McLaughlin, he was a great footballer, Johnny Kinsella was in the bar there. They had a great football team.
17. **MM:** Did Vincent go straight to Jammet's after finishing school, do you know? I think they sent him to the Hotel Bristol in Paris which the Jammet family owned, and that he later became head chef or Jammets. I think they understood that after Marc Faure was leaving that the unions wouldn't agree with employing another foreigner.
18. **SK:** That's right, but when you think about Rolland, and his son Henri took after him, he had a restaurant also.

Discussion on sport and his two sons

19. I never had a drink in my life, because poor Ernie Evans, now he died too young too, Eddie Callaghan, the cooking wine.
20. **MM:** But there was a lot of that, that is what killed Vincent in the end, wasn't it, the drink? He must have been very young, in his 30s or so?
21. **SK:** Yes, indeed, and Mr. Dunne, I mean he was one of the senior men, and he always had the hat on the side of the head, and he was always so immaculately dressed.
22. **MM:** So you did your primary education in Canice's?
23. **SK:** That's right, the reason I went to O'Connell's was that Biddy Boylan was the choir mistress and Eamon O Gallaghóir was in Canice's, I was head hunted, it was not to do with

scholarship (laugh), it is like rugby or football now, that is how I ended up singing in the various things and the big hall, but it is funny when we used to go to Croke Park, we'd park the car in the back of O'Connell's school. One thing, apart from God giving me talent, I have a wonderful memory. I can meet people who dined at the restaurant twenty or thirty years ago and tell them what they had to eat. I could go in and take an order for twelve people for twelve starters and twelve main courses, and you would always get one person who would say, can I change my mind? Now I wouldn't write anything down, I used to say to the waiters 'the lady in the blue dress is having this, the gentleman in the red tie is having that'. What really upsets me is when you go out and they come in and say 'who's having what?', Jesus!!! and they always serve the men first.

24. **MM:** Where is the professionalism gone?
25. **SK:** Well, it's coming back with these Polish people but it looks like they will probably be leaving, there will be an exodus out of the place, but they were the things. Yo see business people, when they go abroad, they are entertained to the highest, and when they get the chance to reciprocate they come and they'd phone me up, and a man would book a table for ten or twelve. We had a thing that the door was always locked because we lived upstairs, and either Audrey or myself would greet them at the door and they would come into the bar and they wouldn't ask what they wanted, there was a glass of wine put in their hand. And then the waiters would take the food in, in its natural state, and then I'd come in, and I'd say 'Mr. Smith you are having your usual wine', and he'd say 'oh, yes Seán', the bloke wouldn't know what I was talking about, but around the table they would be saying 'oh, yer man is a regular here', It was psychological, now I am not going to give him a bottle of plonk and he's not going to worry if he pays fifty or a hundred pounds for it, he is able to reciprocate the treatment that he got abroad. And then you get the other side of the coin, a chap phones me up and says to me 'I hope to get engaged tonight', and I say no problem, come around eight, and he says 'there is only one problem, my fiancé and I only eat burgers', and I say no problem, so they arrived and I told the waiter 'don't give them the menu, give them a bit of melon, then the main course, then give them a bit of dessert'. And in the visitors book, he wrote 'she said yes', and she wrote 'I'll always remember this burger' (laugh), you see most places would have said to them 'get lost', but in one corner there was Garrett Fitzgerald with a crowd, and I'd say, but the reputation that was built up and people writing about the bills, the idea of having a menu with no prices, that was required by our customers who were entertaining.
26. **MM:** You still have that in the upmarket places on the continent; the only person who gets a price on the menu is the host.
27. **SK:** That's right, I remember one day some lunatic rang me saying that he was sitting in a pub and there were six people in your restaurant last night and they paid two thousand pounds for their food. And I said, if you can get the receipt off them you come here and dine for free as long as I am here! Opening a restaurant at that time was in a difficult period in the 1970s.
28. **MM:** Can I bring you back to how you got started? We'll try and keep it in sequence if possible. What age were you when you finished in O'Connell's?
29. **SK:** I must have been fourteen, I probably only did a year. I'll tell you who was there, Ollie Freeney was there, Dennis O'Mahony was there, the head brother was known as the beak and you didn't cross him. I used to serve 10am mass and I'd arrive up to class around 11am but there was never any problem because I was the one winning all the certificates in the Round Hall in the Mansion House (for singing), that was very important to Brother O'Driscoll who wrote me a beautiful reference when I was leaving. O'Connell's wasn't the same as Canice's. There was a PE trainer who was an ex sergeant major in the army and you knew how to march, that was the break in the school. It was incredible, it is amazing how you see people coming towards you and you know even before talking to them, an old captain taught me if you have an appointment with somebody always arrive at least fifteen minutes before you are due. It was the same with school, I was a stickler for time and I still am. I played football for them.

30. But the history, in the restaurants, the Green Rooster in O'Connell's Street, the chicken there, you couldn't beat it. And the Paradiso in Westmoreland Street, you had that lovely man up on top and if he gave you rubbish you couldn't complain, he was so gracious. He made you feel as if you were the only one in the place, but that doesn't happen nowadays.
31. **MM:** What was your first entry into a kitchen or the restaurant world, and how did it come about?
32. **SK:** When I got my school holidays, a friend of my father got me a job in Millers on Thomas Street, they were a family in the business of making whiskey and wine, and Ivor had been in India and he came back and he had this old Rolls Royce and it wasn't working, but there was a man called Mr Bell who was in charge of getting it going, and he got me to lend a hand with the monkey work as they used to call it. Johnny Kinsella's father worked there and he said the Johnny was going to work in a new restaurant which was Frascatti's, so that was my entrance, and there was a chap called Arthur Madden and another chap called Jimmy Ryan in Frascatti's and the fridge was the back lane, everything you cooked at night was put out there to cool off. That was my first introduction, I got the reference from a guy called O'Brien who was about six feet tall, he was the manager. He came from the Red Bank, I think. It was owned by a Jewish family, Frascatti's and his wife worked in the office, she was a lovely lady. Kevin O'Meara worked there because I used to walk home with him, he lived in Seville Place.
33. **MM:** Frascatti's was quite an upmarket restaurant?
34. **SK:** Oh it was, it was unbelievable, it was the place at the time on Suffolk Street. (looking at reference from Frascatti's) It was 1947, I was employed as an Improver chef, I was there for about seven months, but it was the late nights that my parents didn't suit since I was so young, so I went down to the Gresham.

Discussion about the 'Would you believe' television programme. Audrey arrives in to the room and prepared coffee. Tape recorder turned off for a while.

35. **MM:** So you went from O'Connell's to the Technical School in Marino, they did a year there a bit like the transition year now, is that right?
36. **SK:** That's it, and I played football there with Snitchy Ferguson who played for Vincents. Of course Snitchy went to jail for leaning towards the IRA, and sure Jimmy Kilbride was arrested for selling the *Poblacht*. Poor fellow, when we heard that we were in the Gresham, and we used to go out hail, rain or snow to play football on our break up in the Phoenix Park. His son is running the business for him now, but Jimmy was a character.
37. **MM:** Jimmy would have done all his training in the Gresham, and even though you were in primary school with him, you would have come to Gresham later than Jimmy?
38. **SK:** Oh indeed, he was number one guy in the Gresham, he as the one carrying McManus, but he was unbelievable, Jimmy.
39. The chef in the Moira when Willy Opperman was there was Daly, he lives in Galway now.
40. **MM:** Going back to Frascatti's, it was on par with Jammet's but it only lasted around two years?
41. **SK:** Well you know why that was?

Discussion off tape which confirmed previous stories I had heard that some of the staff had been stealing and forced the business to close

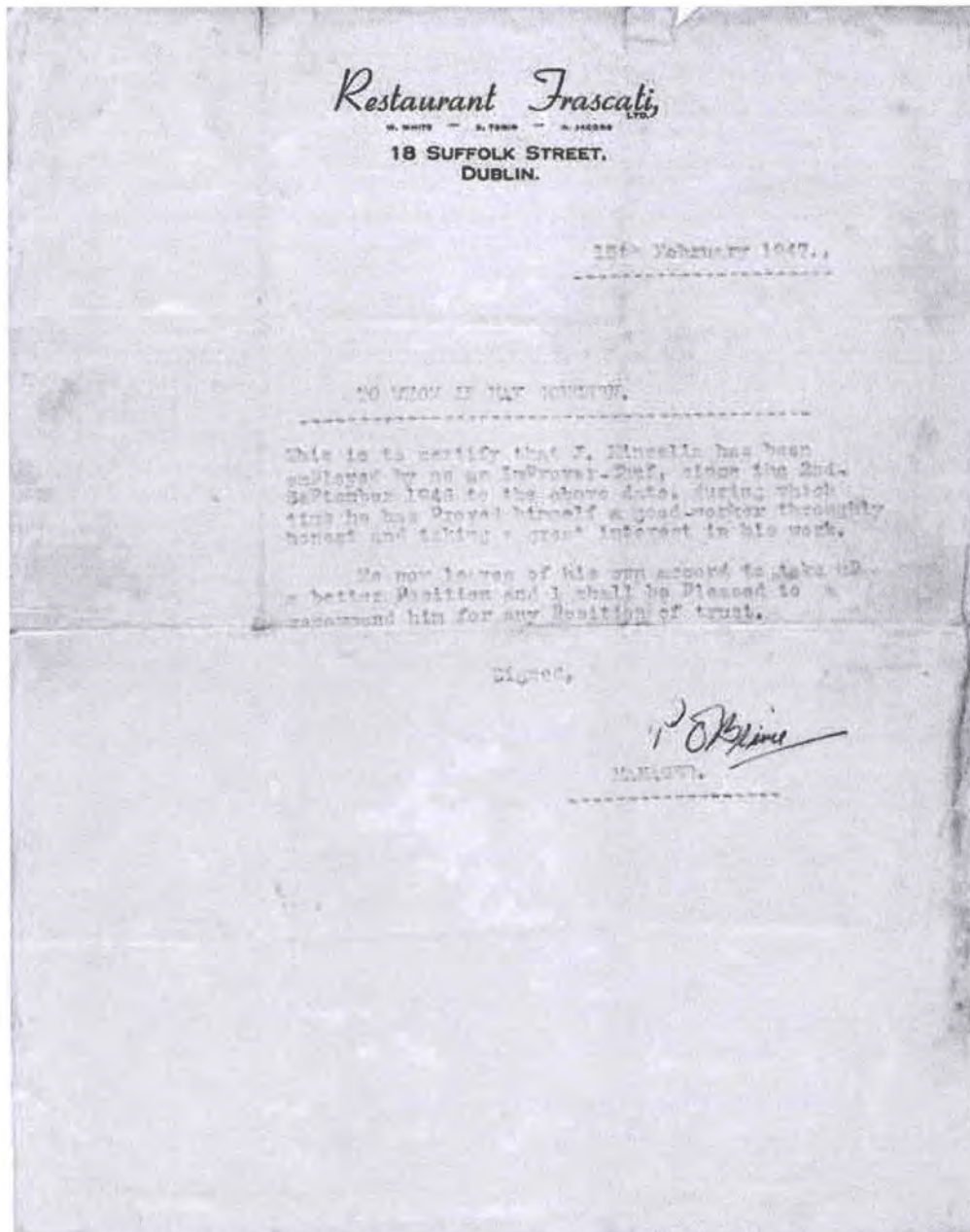


Figure SK.2: Sean Kinsella Reference from Frascati's Restaurant, Dublin (15/2/47)

42. **MM:** So you went to Toddy in the Gresham, tell me about that?
43. **SK:** That was Toddy, I remember at that period everything was so scarce, and he would travel the country and go into old bars and buy all the old whiskey, the ports and etc. Cooking oil was very scarce and we used to make our own mayonnaise and that, but one day this guy came and said he had so many gallons of oil and Toddy said 'meet me at twelve o'clock tonight in the garage' and paid him, and a couple of days went by and then the head waiter John O'Callaghan, in the grill room, went up to Toddy and said 'there is something terrible going on, all the housekeeping staff are complaining about tummy problems, I think it is something to do with the

mayonaise'. It had turned out that your man had sold him cod liver oil for cooking oil (laugh). Paddy Fitzpatrick, God rest him, trained under Toddy and his first job in the kitchen was a big chopping board, two knives and a load of flour to chop up.

44. **MM:** They were winding him up.
45. **SK:** He was the only person to have a sports car, his people were publicans up in Dalkey, and he used to take us all up and down the lane and all around. And with that time the things they used to do with the managers at that time, like look them in their rooms. One manager who was there Bentley nearly did away with himself.
46. **MM:** Tell me about Bentley, didn't he have a restaurant later on Baggot Street? (**note:** The assistant manager was called Bennett)
47. **SK:** No he became a butler in private service, it was Mac Sweeney who went in there (Bentley's). He was known as 'Medals', he was an extraordinary individual. People ask you what was the most difficult thing to do? When the Pope came to Ireland I was asked to make Irish stew for him and I said no. They asked 'are you an atheist?' and I said no, I was an altar boy, I sang with the choir, so they said 'what's your problem?', I said there are two ladies up in the papal nuncio's home all their life, and I'm going to go up there and go in, and take away the only bit of pride that they will get in their lives to cook Irish stew (for the Pope). He took a step back and said 'that's incredible'. So Bishop Casey got on the phone to 'Medals' to come down and cook the Irish stew, and the ladies up in the palace got a word of this and got on the phone to the women in Bishop Casey's house in Galway. They went to the bishop and said 'if that man comes in here, were walking out'. So someone was sent to the station to meet 'Medals' and send him back home. But you can get carried away with your own importance and you forget.
48. It is like the thing that was on the programme 'Would you believe', when we cooked at Christmas in the Mansion House for the homeless, and the man said to me 'hey Mr. *Mirabeau*, I've a complaint', my heart dropped, the two of us had cooked the meal for 700 and I said 'did you not enjoy your meal?' and he said 'oh the dinner was beautiful', so said I 'what is your complaint?', and he said 'there was no cheese board!!!'. You know the Dublin wit (laugh), and did you see the fellow with his arms around poor Charlie (Haughey) and the pint glass in his pocket. I mean we raised one million for charity and never took one sausage, because you read about how the proceeds of a charity can go, there may be a hundred grand and the charity might only get a grand out of it by the time everybody has got their bits and pieces.
49. **MM:** You came in to the Gresham, Toddy met you, you started in the kitchen, Uhlemann must have been there, what age was Uhlemann at this stage, in his late 60s or even more?
50. **SK:** Oh yeah, he was ninety odd when they retired him, and he died a week afterwards, he would have lived a lot longer if they had left him. It has been written that Karl Uhlemann is responsible for getting Irish chefs to be world renowned.
51. **MM:** I think at that stage there were two main academies, the kitchen of Jammet's and that of the Gresham under Uhlemann. Uhlemann trained so many. Later on when Rolland came along the Russell was another academy.

Story of Seán's nephew working with Rolland and his career after that in Cork.

52. **MM:** How many years did you do in the Gresham?
53. **SK:** I think it stipulates it there on my reference, I did four years.
54. **MM:** So Uhlemann was there, and MacManus was second in command, and I suppose Paddy Roberts was there?

55. **SK:** He was, he was in the pastry house and Willy Johnston was in the larder, before going out to the airport, and apart from his brilliance, he was a lovely man, a real quiet unassuming guy, and there was a fellow called Tommy Monaghan who was on the grills and a fellow called Jimmy Maguire, he ended up working up in the Green Tureen in Harcourt Street, where the woman was put into the fire. (tape turned off for story). Jimmy Flahive used to come in, he was the non army man in Portobello barracks. In the larder you had Willy Johnston, Franky Plummer, and Garret Maguire who was a *commis*, that was three, in the bake house you had the lady who used to make the cakes, Pauline, and you had Dessie Cunningham who used to be out on the grill before Paddy Roberts; you had Macker and Jimmy Kilbride, Tommy Monaghan and Tommy Dunne on the grill, and you had a little lady called Annie who was Karl Uhlemann's girlfriend on the vegetables, and she had two assistants; you had two people in the pot house and you had Jimmy French who was the silver king who used polish all the silver, and that was it. That was the brigade, Pauline was the woman in the pastry.
56. **MM:** Well fair play to your memory (laugh) well done. I heard women used to come in and look after the vegetables and the potatoes in particular?
57. **SK:** Well Annie was the number one vegetable lady, there were three others who did the potatoes, the terminology they used was spud barbers, peeling the potatoes. There were no female chefs as such but it was great to see them coming in later. I used always say that to say the men are far better cooks than women is a fallacy because there are far more women in the world cooking than men.
58. **MM:** So you were in the Gresham from 1946 to 1950 and Karl Uhlemann gave you this reference, where did you go then?
59. **SK:** Kevin O'Rourke head hunted me down to the Commodore in Cobh



Figures SK.3: References (a) Hotel Commodore 1951 (b) Gresham Hotel 1950

Stories of a job in the Hammond Lane Foundry and the Miller's in Thomas Street, Johnny Giles and Shamrock Rovers, the six burglaries and the kidnap attempt on the sons.

60. Louis Kilcoyne (of Shamrock Rovers and Barton Kilcoyne's brother) was a waiter in the Gresham.
61. **MM:** We'll come to that, but you leave the Gresham and go to the Commodore in Cobh where Kevin O'Rourke is manager. Tell me about that?
62. **SK:** Kevin had been head waiter in the Gresham and the owner of the Commodore Mr Sheer was a Jewish man, and had been a customer in the Gresham. I started there as a *commis* and ended up as head chef (laugh), Jaysus, when you think of it, and that's where I got the *grá* for it. I was there for a year from July 1950 to June 1951, I was head chef but I was the only chef there, speed promotion, breakfast, lunch and dinner!!!

(Showing me Johnny Giles' cap and also a medal from the Tokyo Olympics where Seán's ship was used as a floating hotel in Yokahama, and they prepared lunch and evening meals for the passengers who were there for the games)

63. Jack Doyle (the boxer) came in one day in the Gresham and lifted me up on the table and put a ten bob note in my pocket, then you had Victor Mc Lagan was a famous actor, Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor, Grace Kelly used to go up and stay in Toddy's house in Killiney. Toddy and his wife and two sisters came one evening and knocked on the door and I opened and he said 'how long are you working here?' (laugh), I said 'I'm working here but I also own the place (laugh). I have a photo of him there, every visitors book we have, and the people, it was something that we never visualised.
64. In the old days you came home and you went to a restaurant and you'd get the Swiss paté and you'd say to the waiter 'have you nothing better?', and he'd say 'ah, sure we've been serving that for years'. And you would have a steak well done, some French fried onions and chips and a bottle of blue nun. But we are a nation of travellers and that is where we got the experience of eating the food of other countries.

Audrey arrives with Seán's seaman's logbook

65. **MM:** You were fifteen years on the one ship the Oronsay, then on to the Arcadia up to Alaska, then on the Canberra. Your last voyage was in 1972.
66. **SK:** That's right, we were thirty five years married in the 7th July.
67. **MM:** Were you getting fed up at sea or is Audrey the reason you settled down?
68. **SK:** Well, my parents were getting older and the voyages were getting longer and they started flying you home and you had to give up your cabin with all your personal stuff in it, and then they brought in pro-forma menus for the whole voyage written by some 'headbanger' in London, which was like television dinners, whereas before that you were in charge of your own menus, ordering the produce, and you had an input into (things) not television dinners, so that was not for me. So I came home and a friend of mine met me and said there is a house out in Sandycove, you should look at it. And that was it, it went for £30,000. Our bedroom was sold for €1.5million recently before the downturn started, it's the most fabulous location. You had Howth and Bray.
69. **MM:** Its 1972, you have been nineteen years at sea, you have a few bob in your pocket, did you have enough to buy out the building or did you have to get a mortgage?
70. **SK:** No, there was a passenger on the ship who lived in a mansion in Howth, his name was Len Fox and his lovely wife, and he used to work for builders and I told him about my plan, and

he said he'd come out and check out the building for me, and everything was fine, so I went to the bank and I told him. Now he told me that he'd like to have an interest and we got on like a house on fire, but one day he had to leave Ireland and we bought him out. So that is what happened. So we lived upstairs, because it was ideal, there is no way that I could have been with the customers until four or five in the morning if Audrey was up there with the two little boys, but when we went to the courts

SEAMAN'S RECORD BOOK
CERTIFICATE OF DISCHARGE

NAME OF SEAMAN: KINSELLA, SEAN
 DATE OF BIRTH: 24/6/31
 HEIGHT: 5-2
 WEIGHT: 140
 PHOTOGRAPH: [Portrait of Sean Kinsella]

CERTIFICATES OF DISCHARGE

No.	Name of ship and official number, and voyage.	Date and place of engagement.	Date and place of discharge.	Rating.
1	ORONSAY R.M. 184415 N.S. 15115 London	20.11.53 Tilbury	29.3.54 Rouen	Boat
2	Do	12.4.54 Tilbury	14.8.54 Tilbury	Boat
3	Do	18.9.54 Tilbury	2.10.54 Southampton	Boat
4	Do	3.10.54 Tilbury	14.2.55 Tilbury	Boat
5	Do	28.2.55 Tilbury	9.5.55 Tilbury	Boat

Figure SK.4: Sean Kinsella's Seaman's Record Book 1953

SEAMAN'S LOGBOOK
CERTIFICATE OF DISCHARGE

NAME OF SEAMAN: KINSELLA, SEAN
 DATE OF BIRTH: 24/6/31
 HEIGHT: 5-2
 WEIGHT: 140
 PHOTOGRAPH: [Portrait of Sean Kinsella]

CERTIFICATES OF DISCHARGE

No.	Name of ship and official number, and voyage.	Date and place of engagement.	Date and place of discharge.	Rating.
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2	Do	12.4.54 Tilbury	14.8.54 Tilbury	Boat
3	Do	18.9.54 Tilbury	2.10.54 Southampton	Boat
4	Do	3.10.54 Tilbury	14.2.55 Tilbury	Boat
5	Do	28.2.55 Tilbury	9.5.55 Tilbury	Boat

Figure SK.5: Seaman's Logbook 1953 - 1955

R 600050				11 CERTIFICATES		OF DISCHARGE 12	
Compiled from Lists of Crew and Official and Copy of Report of Character						Log Books or from other Official Records, if desired by the Seaman.	
No	Name of ship and official number, and tonnage.	Date and place of Engagement* Discharge	Rating	Description of voyage	Copy of Report of Character For rating For general conduct	Signature of (1) Master, and (2) officer and official stamp	
13	ORONSAY O.N. 184415 LONDON	24 JUN 1957 2 SEP 1957	2nd Cook	Y	VERY GOOD	[Signature]	
14	ORONSAY O.N. 184415 LONDON	11.10.57 Tilbury	2nd Cook	Y	VERY GOOD	[Signature]	
15	ORONSAY O.N. 184415 LONDON	23/4/58 Tilbury	2nd Cook	Y	VERY GOOD	[Signature]	
16	ORION O.N. 184493 LONDON	26 JUN 1958 25 SEP 1958	Chief	AUSTRALIAN MAILS	VERY GOOD	[Signature]	
17	ORION O.N. 184493 LONDON	12 SEP 1958 21 NOV 1958	Chief	Y	VERY GOOD	[Signature]	
18	ORONSAY O.N. 184415 LONDON	23 FEB 1959 Tilbury	Chief	Y	VERY GOOD	[Signature]	

R 600050				23 CERTIFICATES		OF DISCHARGE 24	
Compiled from Lists of Crew and Official and Copy of Report of Character						Log Books or from other Official Records, if desired by the Seaman.	
No	Name of ship and official number, and tonnage.	Date and place of Engagement* Discharge	Rating	Description of voyage	Copy of Report of Character For rating For general conduct	Signature of (1) Master, and (2) officer and official stamp	
49	ARCADIA O.N. 184415 LONDON	26 MAR 1959 20 JUL 1959	Chief	Y	VERY GOOD	[Signature]	
50	ARCADIA O.N. 184415 LONDON	4.1.70 Sole	Chief	Y	VERY GOOD	[Signature]	
51	ARCADIA O.N. 184415 LONDON	7.4.71 Sole	Chief	Y	VERY GOOD	[Signature]	
52	ARCADIA O.N. 184415 LONDON	22.9.71 Sole	Chief	Y	VERY GOOD	[Signature]	
53	ORONSAY O.N. 184415 LONDON	4/2/71 Sole	Chief	Y	VERY GOOD	[Signature]	
54	ARCADIA O.N. 184415 LONDON	31 MAR 1972 21/1/72	Chief	Y	VERY GOOD	[Signature]	

Figure SK.6: Sean Kinsella's Seaman's Logbook 1957 – 1972

71. **MM:** I'll stop you there Seán (laugh), and just bring you back, you opened up, how quick did things develop, how was business at first?
72. **SK:** It was word of mouth, that here was something different happening, there was no you are in at seven and out at nine, fifty seats is all you did, we never double booked tables, you were in at eight and you could be there until eight the next morning if you wanted to be.
73. **MM:** What was your unique selling point or vision when you opened up, did you set out deliberately to create something new?
74. **SK:** We made people feel that they were coming into somebody's home, either Audrey would meet them or I'd meet them. And when they were going, either Audrey would say goodnight or I'd say good night, and this had never happened before. If you were there at two or three in the morning, the chairs were not being put up on the tables around you and would you mind paying your bill at reception, and this had never happened before, plus the fact that we were buying the best produce and if it wasn't as we wanted it, we didn't serve it. And then all the big food people around the world got to hear about it, and all the awards we all got, we never dreamed or wanted to be known as 'you can't afford to go in there'. It's twenty four years since we closed and people still talk about the restaurant.
75. You are not in the business to make the quick kill, we put more in than we were taking out but we were happy, we had two lovely sons, but when the crunch came, we were not forced to close, we went into voluntary liquidation. It was not that we hadn't paid our tax, we got an assessment, the law is you pay the assessment and then fight to get it back which we were not willing to do.
76. **MM:** You opened up, gradually developed an international reputation, how many people had you working with you?
77. **SK:** We had two ladies doing the washing up, but if we were not there the place was closed, because nobody would have the same interest as us, and people used to say 'are you not afraid that you would loose custom?', but when we opened up again people couldn't come back quick enough to let us know where they had been. We build up a relationship with the customers, and if we knew a man's wife was having a baby, Audrey would go down to Michaels (Maternity Hospital) with a bunch of flowers and a bottle of champagne. If people had a birthday, we'd organise a cake, the personal touch, and people would be able to tell visitors, 'when you go out here, the door will be locked, the wife or the husband will come out and greet you, and if that didn't happen, how would that person feel? As one would say, 'you are only as good as your last meal'.
78. **MM:** You inspired a generation of chefs because they saw you as the first celebrity Irish chef with an image of success, did you market yourself and the restaurant specifically to get the press coverage you got?
79. **SK:** We never once advertised. Mr Owen who was the government PR. He came into the kitchen and asked me one evening who does your PR. And I said what is PR? He said public relations. I said I don't have a PR, this is all just word of mouth. Well, he said 'if I was your PR I would charge you a hundred thousand a year'. Barry Manilow came with all his entourage one night, and Jim Aiken, who was a lovely man and started bringing all the big stars here, his sons run it now, but the phone went and 'Jim here Seán, Barry Manilow is coming to town and I'll try and get him to come out to you tomorrow night'. I said to him 'Jim, Barry and all his entourage are in the restaurant tonight', and he said 'Feck off' (laugh). And I would always ask people and I'd say 'how did you know to come here' and he'd say 'I met Larry in LA and I told him I was coming to Dublin and he said 'you must go to the *Mirabeau*'. And Larry was Lord Laurence Olivier. He came over to make *Inchon* in Ardmore Studios (1981), I was asked to do the cooking for Laurence Olivier, and it took so many hours to make him up like McArthur, that everything I had to make for him had to be made up like baby food so that he could eat it through a straw,

because if he was to use a knife and fork, and he cracked any of the make up, it would have taken hours to re-do it. He used to come to the restaurant at night time and he was one of the most gracious gentlemen. Like that it was word of mouth, when Burt Lancaster came with his lovely wife and there was a bit of a kaffuffle in the bar and he stood up and said 'Seán, you better get that man out of here or there will be a murder here'. And your man Michael Winner had pulled a stroke on him and he had been with Judy Agatha and he had to go, he had pulled some stroke on Burt Lancaster.

80. **MM:** Michael Winner was a famous Western director at that stage wasn't he?
81. **SK:** That's right, your man left, and a few weeks later the phone rang and said 'Seán' and it was Burt and he said 'I'm sitting here in LA with some AH's who think they know about restaurants, and one has a private jet, so we will be with you tomorrow', so I went out to the airport with the Rolls and went on to the tarmac to pick them up. And I asked him 'how do you judge a restaurant?' and he said 'that's easy, by the bread, if your hungry the first thing you do is pick up the bread, and if it is stale, your taste buds are destroyed, and then by the coffee, if you get a bum cup of coffee after a beautiful meal you wake up the next morning and your mouth feels like a kipper box that a cat has slept in and peed in' and it is so true. Audrey or I, it didn't matter how many cups of coffee you had you always got a new cup because you can't pour coffee in where you had coffee, it is not the same. It is the same with butter, you go into places and you have to unravel them, we had a square of butter and piece of parsley, if it wasn't used, it would be used for cooking. These are the little things, ashtrays; we always put one on top of it and took it away. And the waiters were dressed in riding waistcoats and stock, because bows will fall, and Audrey used to iron them, and they copied that in a movie called 'The Hotel', they had the same idea. People used to come and take photographs. When we painted the place black, they all thought we were mad, but all if you paint on the seafront any light colour, the sea destroys it. We even had the kitchen black and when the man who was minister of health came in one night, he said 'all my dreams are answered, those hospital kitchens are driving me nuts!'.
82. What has hurt me most, about all these television chefs, they drive me mad, they may be good, but where is the nice white uniform?
83. **MM:** There was a restaurant previous to you here run by an English man, did you buy from him?
84. **SK:** Oh yes, we did, his name was West Waffington, he was an ex-RAF pilot, and had a wooden leg and was fully convinced that the IRA were going to come and blow the place up. He started in the Wagon Wheel, in Molesworth Street way, he was a lovely man, he started that, it was run for those type of people.
85. **MM:** So did the *Mirabeau*, when he was here, cater for a gay clientele?
86. **SK:** Oh yes, it was all for the gays, but he was fully convinced that the IRA were going to blow him up.
87. **MM:** Was it a Rolls or a Bentley that you had? Jimmy Kilbride told me that during the bank strike you had a lot of money and were afraid the IRA was going to come in and take it and that some customer was down on her luck and that you bought her Rolls because there was less chance of them stealing the car (laugh). Is there any truth in that or is it just urban legend?
88. **SK:** During the first bank strike, everybody lived like millionaires, the second bank strike nobody would take a cheque. Ninety percent of our business was not cash, it was credit cards, which you cannot manipulate, and the rest were company cheques that you cannot manipulate. That car was bought for £2500, I had a Bentley before that and I did it up and sold it to an American. I bought the Bentley from Kavey's the Rolls Royce people in Lad Lane had the Bentley, we got it for practically for nothing, and had it done up and Mr Hogan, the man who

started the restaurant in Dun Laoghaire, *Restaurant na Mara*, he said to me 'if I leave this car with my family it will be wrecked, and my wife wants to go to an auction to buy a painting', so I went down to the bank manager and borrowed £2,500. It had belonged to Lady Granard.

89. **MM:** So you followed the seasons with your food?

90. **SK:** Indeed like Toddy, I liked to have things that nobody else had. I bought game off John Howard when he was in Wexford. One day Frank Delaney from the BBC turned up with his 'hurdy gurdy' and asked 'are you serving strawberries tonight?' I am, said I, so he came in and I used to serve them in half a pineapple and marinate them in cointreau, and it was on the BBC the next morning. I got an irate phone call from Frank Mahony who was the head chef in the Glenview Hotel in Wicklow, who had paid one thousand pounds for two punnets of strawberries in the Dublin market. He said 'you are the biggest liar, you were on the BBC saying you had the first Irish strawberries', and I said 'wait a minute, did I say they were Irish strawberries, I wasn't asked and didn't say they were Irish, we get strawberries all year round from Japan, California etc. 'If I were asked if they were Irish, I would have said no'. The Glenview was owned by the Staffords who owned the Gresham.

91. **MM:** That was the big thing for publicity at the time, to buy the first salmon, or the first pheasant or the first strawberries, and the money normally went to charity?

Discussion on restaurateurs divulging secrets of their customers to the press

92. **MM:** Tell me about the front of house staff? Audrey ran front of house, and you had a few waiters?

93. **SK:** We had two waiters, and then we had the lads from the airport, Sammy who was there for years, and used to do the Christmas dinner for Charlie every year, and Noel was great too, all casuals, and they at night time would sit down and have whatever they wanted and a glass of wine and then we'd get them home. We had a few French lads as well that were very nice, and we had a great relationship with our waiters, they got some great tips and if it was left on the credit cards, they got it all, we didn't stop them the interest we'd be charged by the American Express or the Diners Card crowd.

94. **MM:** You had a policy of driving customers home?

95. **SK:** Oh, yes, because I could not let a man get into a car that was after drinking extra port or wine who could kill himself or somebody else. One night the head of the Insurance Corporation of Ireland was in and he had a Russian Prince with him and I told this story to his son later, I always took the keys of the cars and when he was leaving I said 'I'm taking you home' and he said 'Seán, if I go home without the car my wife will think that I was down in Leeson Street or Dolly Faucettes or somewhere', I said let me take you home, so I flashed a taxi to follow me in his car and to take me back, which he did, and next morning at 7am and the customer phoned me and said 'Am I in the horrors, didn't you leave me home last night?' And I told him I did, and explained how his car was outside his driveway.

96. I remember one night we used to get a lot of Arabs, and Sheiks coming, and this two came with a whole entourage with them and I would never say a thing, just the waiter would say your taxi is outside, and the two of them got into the back and the conversation was 'we thought that man was a very nice man when we came in, but he never said good bye to us', so I turned around and I said 'I know, that's because I'm driving you back to your hotel' (laughter). Back at the hotel they put £200 in my hand (laugh).

Other various stories and discussion on feedback from the 'Would you believe' programme.

97. **SK:** We had the great film star Cary Grant came on board with his wife, she stayed up in the State Room, and he came down on his own, and no matter what was put in front of him, he used to say 'take it away'. So this night he came down and he said to the head waiter 'I want a Caesar Salad, and a Fillet Mignon, and Gratin Potatoes and Champignons', so the head waiter came into me and I got it all ready and brought it out, the next minute he's back in 'he doesn't like it'. So I went in and I had the menu and I said 'excuse me sir, I'm the executive chef and I prepared that meal especially for you, and I am very disappointed, I have to put this down in writing'. He said 'you do that, guy', so I am letting on to write and I said 'excuse me sir, could I have your name please?' and he said 'you bastard'. I could have given him muck after that!!! But he was living on pills at that time, and that appeared in every newspaper 'Cary Grant, Cary Who?' (laugh). There was always ways of bringing people down, you don't let them royal you, I was the first head chef to grace a ships dining room, because most of the chefs before that were 'langers' (drunk).

Stories of happenings on the ships

98. **SK:** One Christmas the pastry chef was trying to flame the Christmas pudding and there was a problem. He said to me 'this is burn brandy, it's not flaming'. I tasted it and it was cold tea that had been swapped by whoever had drunk the brandy (laugh).
99. **MM:** So the Christmas Pudding became a tea brack! (laugh)
100. **MM:** You had mentioned on the phone about where Toddy had me his wife?
101. **SK:** Yes, he met her in Gibraltar giving dancing lessons. She was Niamh from Kerry and she fell in love with him when he was giving dancing lessons to her, and she came home and told the family, much to their disapproval, and she said I don't care, I'm getting married to him anyway. So they gave her what she was due from the family business and she came to Dublin and he was working in the Four Courts Hotel at the time. There was an old head hall porter who was a shareholder in the Gresham and she bought his shares and Toddy went as manager from the Four Courts to the Gresham. He gradually bought up more shares and eventually took the whole place over. It was his domain.
102. He had a great thing with weddings, Paddy Kingsbury was the head waiter, he was like a father to me, and when Macker nearly killed me and I was taken over to Jervis Street (Hospital) in an ambulance, he went for Macker. (**note:** Macker had locked Seán in a fridge as a gag) You see, I used to stay over after a dance to cook a meal for Paddy Kingsbury. He used to take us out to Red Island, in Skerries that was owned by Fergal Quinn where Peggy Dell used to play, in his car.
103. **MM:** How did Macker nearly kill you?
104. **SK:** Yes, I was in the fridge and he came in behind me and closed the door, and it was only someone else came in and found me or I wouldn't be here now. I was afraid to go in and tell my mother or father to upset them, so he got away with it.
105. **MM:** I believe Macker was a terrible man for letting oranges fly across the kitchen at people? And you said that one waitress stuck a fork in his backside when he groped her?
106. **SK:** He sent Paddy Fitzpatrick into the larder one day for the garnish for a steak Rossini and he came out with a poussin with a sausage up its neck. And then with the melees, and fathers of girls would be waiting outside for him. You had an Italian chap in there who used to fill the garbage with bags of flour and butter, and one night he was stopped going out with two pints of cream in his case, and he was sued. When it came to court, the judge said that it was serious and the Italian said 'with respect, your honour, I paid for that cream in the Kylemore, and I have a receipt for it', so you can imagine the compensation he got, even though... And we were always running low on chickens and Toddy said next time the chicken guy comes in let me know. There was a big scales in the kitchen, and Toddy watched your man weigh the box of chickens, and then

said 'now, excuse me, please take the chickens out of the box and weigh the box', the box weighed twice as much as the chickens! And they used to sell the waste fat for making black soap out of it, Macker used to put stones down the bottom of it to bring up the weight (laugh). One night, Toddy caught somebody trying to break into a room and chased him down into the kitchen and held him in the pastry house with a copper pan in his hand until someone came to help (laugh), and another day he was walking down O'Connell Street with his dog and he spots two guys waling towards him with two chairs from the Winter Gardens (laugh) so he stops them and they said they were having them repaired, there was nothing wrong with them, they were nicking them (laugh).

Story about dinners in Barry's Hotel on All Ireland Sunday when a row broke out between the two teams

107.MM: You mentioned that you used to cook for the Dublin team in the 1970s.

108.SK: I was up in Santry Avenue one night, and I said to Heffo 'these lads are just come from work, do they get something to eat?' and he said 'you must be joking, we can't afford that, they go to the pub for a pint'. So me and Audrey used to go out with sandwiches. And they were always being slagged for going to pubs, so we invited them out to dinner whether they won or lost. We wrote a menu and named the dishes after all the footballers, and said that there would be a reception in the Father Mathew Hall for the team which would be for teetotalers. We have a photo of my son Andrew sitting in the Sam Maguire Cup.

Discussion about sports teams and charity work

109.MM: You had a list there earlier with *Ostinelli's* on it. Did you eat in *Ostinelli's*?

110.SK: Oh, yeah, I used to go to the Theatre Royal with my mum and dad, you could go and have a movie and a picture. *Ostinelli's* the minestrone was a meal in itself, You see minestrone now and its only 'bog wash', they had the bacon and the spinach and the everything in it. And then you had then you had the Paradiso, you went upstairs and you could have a little dance, George I believe was the head waiter, and he was so gracious, that if he gave you muck and you couldn't complain. There were two floors, the top one was where you went up and had a little dance, and the Regal Rooms of course was where the great man Uhlemann came to the Gresham from.

111.MM: What was the food like in the Regal Rooms? Was it fancy or just a Grill Room?

112.SK: It was very good, it was the place to be seen, for Toddy (O'Sullivan) to go after him (Uhlemann), he wouldn't have picked somebody just from a Grill Room.(end of tape one)

113.MM: So we were talking about the Regal Rooms and *Ostinelli's* and you mentioned the Green Rooster earlier on, did they specialise in *roisserie* chicken?

114.SK: That's right, there was a hatch in the window and it was open late, if you were down in the Cosmo snooker hall beside it, where all the great snooker players used to play and the gambling, you could come up to it or to the Kylemore place was the restaurant beside it, they had a little place there where you could have sardines on toast or a sandwich. As you know, you don't eat when you work in a kitchen, and you get out then and you play a game of snooker, the lads could never get over how I'd have an orange when we were dancing in the National or the Four Ps. They often tried to slip me a Mickey Finn, but I knew having worked in Millers with the whiskey.

115.Another place that was very good was where Noel Mc Devitt was head waiter, Dessie Cunnngnam's brother in law, the Metropole, Peggy Dell played the piano, that was very good. And when you think of the Capitol on Princess Street, that had a restaurant as well, there are no places now, they all went into disco land.

116. Audrey arrives with photos of Seán pouring milk into the Sam Maguire, and photos with Mick Holden, Denise Roussos, the English Show Jumping team, Luke Kelly, Noel Purcell, Joseph Locke, Frank Hall, Phil Coulter, the Shah of Persia, Richard Keil (aka. Jaws),



Figure SK.7: (a) Kinsella with Richard Keil a.k.a. 'Jaws' (b) with Dennis Roussos

117.MM: So you had the bar and two dining rooms?

118.SK: We had two dining rooms, one at the front and one at the back, each would seat about twenty people. And we sometimes opened upstairs for private parties in our sitting room. Ben Dunne phoned us one Saturday night, Ireland was after playing Wales and he brought Gareth Edwards and all the great Welsh players upstairs and they were singing.

119.MM: Did you get an honorary degree in this photo?

120.SK: That was in Boston University, I was the first Irish man ever.

Discussion on Noel Cullen and his passing away

121.MM: You seem to have always been quite dapper, even from your teenage years, did you develop a style?

122.SK: Anyone in the hotel business, waiters, chefs are not, but they are always well dressed. I remember my mother, God rest her, bought me my first set of long trousers when I was in the Tech in Marino, a rust coloured one, and I always remember people admiring it, you know. This suit I'm wearing was made for me in 1981 by Louis Copeland. We couldn't afford to buy them now.

Discussions about clothing



Figure SK.8: Mick Holden with Sean Kinsella and Sam Maguire Cup

123.MM: You were open from 1972 to 1984, you sort of filled a gap in the market because the Russell had shut down in 1974 and Jammet's was closed before that. Do you remember Snaffles on Leeson Street at all?

124.SK: I do indeed, the chef there, his brother worked in the Gresham and later in Woolworths, it was run by Hugh and Rosie Tinne, and their son is now the great pianist. They went in for the game there big time and they were there on Leeson Street. That was a place for much of the barristers and the judges and many of them lived in Killiney and it was handy for them to come to me because I was just down the road. Of course Jammet's, when Marc Faure and Vinnie (Dowling) left, it was bought over by Clayton Love and then it was taken over by the Berni Inn and they changed it all to fast food.

125.MM: Was the Berni Inn like a steak house where you could get fast service?

126.SK: Yes and they had fish as well, different foods on different floors, like they have done now on Bewleys (Grafton Street). McInerney's daughter bought the *Mirabeau* when we sold it. (note: Michel Flamme was the chef)

Discussion on various topics

127.MM: You started horse riding early, I remember Jimmy Kilbride mentioning seeing you with the cropped trousers and all?

128.SK: Yes very young, I used to do two six month world cruises back to back and then had one whole year off on full pay and anywhere there was a horse to be ridden I was there.

Story about American Millionaire and the Leprechaun outfit



Figure SK.9: Sean Kinsella serving milk to Barney Rock in Rolls Royce

129.MM: When you finished up I 1984 you went to Waterville Lake in Kerry for a year?

130.SK: We would have stayed there for ever but it was the year the President Reagan told Americans not to leave America to go on holidays. The Waterville Lake was booked out and it was like a locusts, cancelled, cancelled, cancelled. And Mr. Mulcahy (the owner) who was great friends of the presidents of the United States, Mulcahy knew us, you see, we used to go to Ashford on holidays and Waterville had been closed and he wanted somebody to give it a new lease of life. It was unbelievable, we had a beautiful bungalow there on the lake, and the first night Andrew and Stephen said to us 'isn't it great to be able to go to sleep, daddy', living in fear, we had six burglaries, we had wine stolen from us – a bottle of Mouton Rothschild 1961 which would be £10,000 in English money – and the fellows who stole it probably threw it against the wall saying 'that's too old to drink'. When you went away and we found your house (turned upside down), it was built like a fortress.

Various stories about childhood

131.SK: We had an accountant who used to come twice a week and Audrey would get a cheque because we used to stamp the card. One evening I went down to the back of the little office and this thing that had all the cards fell on the floor and not one of them was stamped. And it so happened that one of the customers had said to us 'you must be paying your accountant some money, because he's down in Elizabeth's every night with Dom Perignon and cigars'. And it was an awful lot of money that he was pocketing, and we knew a man who was in the flying squad (detective), and we told him and he went after your man and he said you have until this evening to give the money back, and he had a girlfriend who was working in the bank and she gave him the money. He had done this to a few people. He left and went to Canada. So we had to get a new accountant. When the revenue came to check the books, he asked us why we had two sets of books. The fellow that was doing us, he left the books, naturally, and the new fellow coming in had brought in a new set of books. They thought we were keeping two sets of accounts.

132.MM: If you were, you were hardly going to have left them for him to see! (laugh)

133.SK: When we went in to the Revenue they had fabricated a story the boys were in private school, that I had a yacht in the bay, we had a house in Killiney, that we had racehorses, that I left the country every six months with bags of money to Switzerland. This was what was built up, and every one was untrue. You see, when you want to go into voluntary liquidation, you have to get permission from the Director of Public Prosecution and he will not give that permission if there is any inkling or fraudulence, if because if he does and there was, he'd be gone. And I could not tell the boys or Audrey when I got the call that we had got the thing. And the first thing that Farrell of Touch Ross wanted me to do was to stay on, and I said 'thank you very much, but what I've gone through here, and what this has done, that we are supposed to owe this that and the other and you owe nothing', and all the newspapers saying that we owed hundreds of thousands, because anyone in business knows that if you owe tax, the first thing they will do is come, take your car, close you down and sell the place for themselves. We got one apology and a photograph that it was totally wrong that we owed anything and an apology that we caused you, the usual, but the thing was that, when these people build up a dossier, and it was a coalition government of Labour and the other and they wanted us to put menus on the wall outside, and I wouldn't, and I said 'when John Bruton puts a list outside his farm for what he gets for his cattle, I might consider, but I'm not putting any menus, this is my home as well as my business'. It was just bureaucracy, and we waited nine years to get to where we are living now, and what we went through with a means test, even the two sons were up, 'do you have any land, any money?', you know, and they'd go in and they'd smirk at you 'oh, I couldn't deal with you, you had the *Mirabeau*', I mean, what's that got to do with it, but nine years. And the day we came out here, eight years ago, the place was all boarded up and the gate was hanging off, and we didn't know what to do, because if we hadn't accepted this, we'd end up in a B&B.

134.MM: You were fifty three years old when the restaurant shut down in 1984, you went to Waterville, and there was bits and pieces, and you went to America for a while, how did that come about?

135.SK: A customer said 'I want to open a *Mirabeau* in New York, and I want you and Audrey to come over', and I went over before Audrey who stayed with the boys, and got it going and the publicity was unbelievable. I did Good Morning America even before that with Robert Redford and I did Irish Stew and he said 'what that man can do with meat and potatoes' (laugh), so they made me a partner. In America, paying bills doesn't come in to it. There was a beautiful big shop right around the corner from Saks and every morning their windows would be smashed because they wouldn't take the mafia garbage collectors. This man used to come in and he would grab the cash and go off to Atlantic City or whatever, and all the people who used to come in to us from New York or Boston used to come down to the restaurant. Teddy Gleeson who was chairman of the Longshoreman's Union was a customer in the restaurant and his son was an attorney and he tipped me off. 'All I'll say is you don't stay there because the IRS are closing in on him, what he's doing there, so I would advise you to get out, since you are down as half owner'. So we discovered then that it is no place to rear children, you'd be walking down fifth avenue and the next thing they'd be gone, the photos were everywhere (of lost children), you know, you've been there yourself. We lived on Fifth Avenue, you could see Central Park from where we were staying, it was an experience.

Yarn about promoting Wedgewood pans on American television. Looking at clippings of newspaper clippings of the New York Times when Craig Claibourne wrote about him which came from a promotion Seán did in the Tavern on the Green in New York.

136.MM: You ran the Mirabowl in Tallaght for a while, I remember reading somewhere that you made more money there than in the *Mirabeau*? Is there any truth in that?



Figure SK.10: Photo of Sean Kinsella in Mirabeau with Christmas Spread

137.SK: Well it was Paschal Taggart that owned it, we were there a year or so but then it was sold. We used to feed the old age pensioners up there every morning for nothing. I was up there at 6am and I'd leave at 11pm. And we would help out with the local boxing club up there. Another thing that we did that is happening more now is that my wife was involved in the business. I've always said that Audrey was not my right hand, she was both my hands.



Figure SK.11: (a) Kinsella with Shah of Persia (b) with Aga Khan Team & Trophy

End of Interview